

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CANBER 00777 102058Z

61

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SAJ-01 TRSE-00 EB-11 OMB-01

MMS-03 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /151 W
----- 118572

R 090225Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2505

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 0777

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, UK, IO, AS

SUBJ: WHITLAM'S COMMENTS ON DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION

REF: (A) STATE 026980 (B) CANBERRA 775 (C) CANBERRA 684

1. SUMMARY: AFP INCOMPLETELY GIVES FLAVOR OF WHITLAM COMMENT IN SINGAPORE, WHICH NOTED BOTH AUSTRALIAN PERMISSION FOR U.S. RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS FROM COCOS AS WELL AS VIEW THAT BUILDUP OF FACILITIES AND INTRODUCTION OF MILITARY FORCES WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT. COUPLING OF RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS FROM COCOS AND DIEGO GARCIA SOMEWHAT PUZZLING, BUT WE ASSUME TRANSCRIPT WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE FOR GREATER DETAIL. DFA DOES NOT YET HAVE TRANSCRIPT. WHITLAM BRIEFED BY BRITISH EMBASSY RANGOON ON DIEGO GARCIA FEB 5. SUBSTANCE OF BRITISH REPORTING TEL APPEARS BELOW. END SUMMARY.

2. AFP STORY FROM SINGAPORE (REF A) INADEQUATELY REFLECTS WHITLAM ANSWER TO QUESTION AT SINGAPORE PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON FEB 8. QUESTION, AS REPORTED IN MELBOURNE AGE FEB 9 WAS WHAT AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE WAS TO DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION ANNOUNCEMENT IN LIGHT OF AUSTRALIAN SUPPORT FOR INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CANBER 00777 102058Z

3. IN REPLY WHITLAM NOTED THAT AUSTRALIA ALLOWS U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT TO USE COCOS ISLANDS FOR STAGING PURPOSES ON SUPPLY AND SURVEILLANCE DUTY. IN REFERRING TO DIEGO GARCIA WHITLAM CLEARLY USED LANGUAGE ALMOST IDENTICAL WITH AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS STATEMENT FEB 7 (REPORTED IN REF B). HOWEVER, OUR REPORTS ON WHITLAM SINGAPORE PRESS CONFERENCE ARE ONLY FRAGMENTARY, AND DFA IN CANBERRA DOES NOT YET HAVE FULL REPORT. WHITLAM SPOKE TO SINGAPORE PRESS CLUB FEB 8 AND TO JOURNALISTS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE FEB 9 FOR MANILA.

4. RE BRIEFING FOR WHITLAM, PARA 6 OF REF C REPORTED THAT BRITISH EMBASSY RANGOON BRIEFED WHITLAM ON DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION FEB 5 DURING WHITLAM'S VISIT THERE. DFA TOLD US THEY HAD REPORT CONFIRMING FACT OF BRIEFING. FOR SOME REASON BRITISH EMBASSY RANGOON DID NOT REPEAT REPORTING TELEGRAM TO BRITISH EMBASSY WASHINGTON. HOWEVER, BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION CANBERRA TELLS US THAT SUBSTANCE OF REPORTING TELEGRAM ON WHITLAM BRIEFING AS FOLLOWS:

QTE ACTION TAKEN WITH WHITLAM.

QTE MR. WHITLAM SPOKE TO ME FORCEFULLY TODAY ABOUT ANALOGY WITH NORTHWEST CAPE, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS MISLEADING AND MISCHIEVOUS. HIS GOVERNMENT HAD INHERITED THESE ARRANGEMENTS AND WOULD HONOR THEM BUT THEY WOULD NOT HAVE CONCLUDED SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT THEMSELVES. PUBLIC USE OF THIS ARGUMENT WOULD EMBARRASS HIM.

QTE OUR AMBASSADOR SAID HE HAD NO REASON TO BELIEVE ANY PUBLIC USE WAS INTENDED. END QTE.

5. AUSTRALIAN PRESS COMMENT CONTINUES TO TAKE GENERALLY REALISTIC VIEW OF DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION. CANBERRA TIMES FEB 9 IN EDITORIAL ENTITLED "IMPOSSIBLE DREAM," SAYS THAT, "THE HOPE THAT THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THE STATES OF THE REGION CAN ONE DAY DEVELOP INTO A ZONE OF PEACE, SHUNNED BY THE NAVAL AND AERIAL FLEETS OF THE MAJOR POWERS, FREE OF FOREIGN MILITARY INSTALLATIONS, AND IN WHICH THE LITTORAL AND REGIONAL STATES WOULD MAINTAIN ONLY SUCH MILITARY UNITS AS WERE INDISPENSABLE TO THEIR SECURITY IS UNEXCEPTIONABLE BUT IT IS HARDLY REALISTIC...IT IS UNREALISTIC TO BELIEVE THAT THE INDIAN OCEAN CAN BE MADE IMPERVIOUS TO THE GLOBAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CANBER 00777 102058Z

INTERESTS OR AMBITIONS OF THE GREAT POWERS. IT IS A SEAWAY OF VITAL ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE TO WESTERN EUROPE, JAPAN, THE SOVIET UNION, THE UNITED STATES, AND AUSTRALIA...GIVEN THE GLOBAL CHARACTER OF THE STRATEGIES OF THE SUPER POWERS, THE INDIAN OCEAN HAS NO CHANCE OF BEING LEFT OUT OF THEIR CALCULATIONS...."

6. COMMENT: UNLESS WHITLAM HAS MADE SOME OTHER STATEMENT ON DIEGO GARCIA IN SINGAPORE, REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM APPEAR FAIRLY

MILD. HIS COUPLING REFERENCE TO AUSTRALIAN PERMISSION FOR U.S. SURVEILLANCE FLIGHTS FROM COCOS WITH NOTE THAT EXPANSION OF FACILITIES OR INTRODUCTION OF MILITARY FORCES WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO LONG-TERM AUSTRALIAN OBJECTIVES IS PUZZLING AND, TO SOME EXTENT, INCONSISTENT. HOWEVER, HE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE MAKING MAJOR POINT OF DIEGO GARCIA. AS SENIOR DFA OFFICER COMMENTED TO US, IN VIEW OF WHITLAM'S SUPPORT FOR INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE PROPOSAL, WE COULD NOT HAVE EXPECTED HIM TO WELCOME DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION. WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY BRITISH EMBASSY RANGOON LIKENED DIEGO GARCIA TO NORTH WEST CAPE. END COMMENT.
HARROP

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SURVEILLANCE, MILITARY AIRCRAFT, PEACE, DIEGO GARCIA, MILITARY BASES, MILITARY BASE AGREEMENTS, OBSERVATION
AIRCRAFT, PRESS CONFERENCES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974CANBER00777
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740244/aaaabovh.tel
Line Count: 126
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) STATE 026980 (B) CANBERRA 775 (C,) CANBERRA 684
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <02 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WHITLAM'S COMMENTS ON DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION
TAGS: MARR, UK, IO, AS, US, (WHITLAM, E GOUGH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005